

MOTION BY MAYOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

February 8, 2011

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. In 1941, the annual observance of children's Dental Health began as a one-day event in Ohio. In 1949, the American Dental association held the first national observance of Children's Dental Health Day. In 1981, the program was extended to a month-long celebration, known today as National Children's Dental Health month, to support dental health awareness throughout the United States.

Poor oral health, specifically tooth decay, **is the most common chronic childhood disease**. Left untreated, pain and infection caused by tooth decay can lead to problems in eating, speaking and learning, can damage a child's self-esteem or, in the worse case, result in serious infections in other parts of a child's body and even lead to death. Severe dental neglect constitutes child abuse. Fortunately, most dental problems can be easily diagnosed and treated. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits help children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. Raising parents' awareness of the importance of oral health care can lead to regular dental visits and prevention regimens for their children.

M O R E**MOTION**

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

KNABE _____

ANTONOVICH _____

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To focus attention on the importance of children's dental health, many activities will take place throughout Los Angeles County. During February 2011 the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, in partnership with community-based organizations, dental schools, local health providers and schools, is coordinating the delivery of oral screening; application of sealants and flouride varnishes; and oral health care education to thousands of children and parents. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors takes an active leadership role in promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle by encouraging all of the County's residents to ensure that their children avoid frequent and high intake of sugar, schedule regular dental check-ups, and follow prevention regimens.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

1. Proclaims the month of February 2011 as "National Children's Dental Health Month" throughout Los Angeles County in recognition of the many activities promoting children's dental health; and
2. Encourages County departments to promote a healthy lifestyle for employees and their children, including encouraging dental screenings, and following the oral health care instructions from their dental care providers.

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MDA:hbb

s/ 2011 motions/ NationalChildren'sDentalHealthAwarenessMonth